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Letters to the Editor

Unjustified Action

The series of atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons announced by President Kennedy as scheduled to be carried out later this month will, if carried out, constitute an unjustified unilateral action by the United States in the direction of increased militarism and away from the goal of general and complete disarmament with international controls and inspection, described in President Kennedy's United Nations address last September.

I have never advocated unilateral disarmament by the United States, or, for that matter, by the Soviet Union. I fear that the militarists in the other country would take advantage of the opportunity provided by such an action. But the United States does in fact take unilateral actions—unilateral actions in the direction of increased militarism — and the Soviet Union follows our lead.

We made and exploded the first atomic bombs and built up the first atomic stockpile. Three years later the Soviet Union followed our example.

We made and exploded the first hydrogen bomb; the Soviet Union was one year behind.

We carried out the first great series of atmospheric tests, polluting the atmosphere with radioactive materials. We built up the first 10,000-megaton stockpile of nuclear weapons, the first nuclear stockpile great enough to achieve the annihilation of an enemy country. The Soviet Union followed.

The score on nuclear weapons tests now stands at 180 for the United States, 105 for the Soviet Union. We still have a lead in nuclear knowledge and a lead in nuclear weapons technology—not the huge lead that we once held, but a lead.

Are we now going to carry out another unilateral act of increased militarism, of increased intensification of the cold war? Is there no hope that

President Kennedy will order the postponement of the announced series of atmospheric tests of nuclear weapons, which if carried out during the Geneva Seventeen-nation Conference on Disarmament would surely decrease the chances of success of this Conference?

Is our great Nation, the United States of America, always going to take the lead in militarism, and never in the fight for peace and disarmament through international agreements with international controls and inspection? Are we for or against the great immorality of war, which now could destroy a major part of the world?

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